MKT 441

Sample Essay Questions

1. An interesting development in supermarket retailing is the "store within a store" concept. "Organic" products are carried in these sections, and radio ads are used to inform consumers about the offerings. You can observe this trend locally. It is a reaction to stores such as Wild Oats and Whole Foods which feature organics.

   Use one institutional change theory mentioned in class to explain this phenomenon.

2. We discussed various forms of channel power and their application. List the five types and give a concrete example of each in a channels context. How can channel members who lack power gain some?

3. A Chicago television ad for jewelry states that "you never have to pay retail again." The jeweler positions itself as a "wholesaler to the public." They claim that high jewelry prices can be traced to excessive retail markups necessary to support fancy stores, etc. They assert their approach has "eliminated the middleman" and the savings have been passed on to consumers.

   Comment on these claims (and their truthfulness) and the viability of this concept from a strategic perspective.

4. Tommy Hilfiger was one of the most successful apparel companies of the 1990’s. Sales are way off from the peak years. Possible reasons include changing tastes in clothing, formidable competition, and charges of racial discrimination against the company.

   Another factor may be Hilfiger’s channels policies. The firm has steadfastly maintained that its products would be sold only by department or specialty stores, or in its own outlet stores. Competitors have broadened their distribution to include discount department stores (Kohl’s) and even discount stores (Target). Do you think Hilfiger should follow suit? What are the advantages and pitfalls to following this strategy?